



Global climate change and children's health (policy statement)

Author(s): Shannon MW, Best D, Binns HJ, Forman JA, Johnson CL, Karr CJ, Kim JJ, Mazur LJ, Roberts JR, Shea KM
Year: 2007
Journal: Pediatrics. 120 (5): 1149-1152

Abstract:

There is broad scientific consensus that Earth's climate is warming rapidly and at an accelerating rate. Human activities, primarily the burning of fossil fuels, are very likely (> 90% probability) to be the main cause of this warming. Climate-sensitive changes in ecosystems are already being observed, and fundamental, potentially irreversible, ecological changes may occur in the coming decades. Conservative environmental estimates of the impact of climate changes that are already in process indicate that they will result in numerous health effects to children. The nature and extent of these changes will be greatly affected by actions taken or not taken now at the global level. Physicians have written on the projected effects of climate change on public health, but little has been written specifically on anticipated effects of climate change on children's health. Children represent a particularly vulnerable group that is likely to suffer disproportionately from both direct and indirect adverse health effects of climate change. Pediatric health care professionals should understand these threats, anticipate their effects on children's health, and participate as children's advocates for strong mitigation and adaptation strategies now. Any solutions that address climate change must be developed within the context of overall sustainability (the use of resources by the current generation to meet current needs while ensuring that future generations will be able to meet their needs). Pediatric health care professionals can be leaders in a move away from a traditional focus on disease prevention to a broad, integrated focus on sustainability as synonymous with health. This policy statement is supported by a technical report that examines in some depth the nature of the problem of climate change, likely effects on children's health as a result of climate change, and the critical importance of responding promptly and aggressively to reduce activities that are contributing to this change.

Source: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1542/peds.2007-2645>

Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Health Professional, Policymaker

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Ecosystem Changes, Extreme Weather Event, Temperature

Extreme Weather Event: Flooding

Temperature: Extreme Heat

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Health Co-Benefit/Co-Harm (Adaption/Mitigation):

specification of beneficial or harmful impacts to health resulting from efforts to reduce or cope with greenhouse gases

A focus of content

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

General Health Impact, Infectious Disease, Injury, Malnutrition/Undernutrition, Mental Health/Stress, Respiratory Effect

Infectious Disease: Foodborne/Waterborne Disease, Vectorborne Disease

Foodborne/Waterborne Disease: General Foodborne/Waterborne Disease

Vectorborne Disease: General Vectorborne

Mental Health Effect/Stress: Stress Disorder

Intervention:

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content


Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Adaptation, Mitigation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern: 

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Children

Resource Type: 

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion

Timescale: 

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment: 

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content